**FY 2011 Roger W. Jones Award Nomination**

**Superior Leadership in Outstanding Organizational Achievement Essay**

**Mr. James H. Smerchansky**

As the Deputy Commander, Systems Engineering Interoperability, Architectures, and Technology (SIAT) for Marine Corps Systems Command (MARCORSYSCOM), Mr. Smerchansky is responsible for leading Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) systems engineering and integration efforts, ensuring Marine Corps systems interoperability with coalition and joint forces, as well as identifying and pursuing science and technology transition opportunities for Marine Corps systems. In the name of providing valued warfighting capabilities, he takes a personal interest in the command’s technical endeavors and is thorough in applying his talents and technical efforts − benefitting the Marines Corps as a whole and MARCORSYSCOM’s acquisition programs in particular. Since coming onboard 18 months ago, he has devoted significant time and effort to leading and chairing technical reviews for high visibility and important acquisition programs and efforts across the command, keeping a laser focus on satisfying the needs of the warfighter with technical rigor and discipline. Addressing programs as diverse as the Ground/Air Task Oriented Radar to the Enhanced Combat Helmet to the Next Generation Enterprise Network, he dives into the technical details to identify potential issues and develop practical solutions for program managers to implement. Continually working with troubled or challenged programs, he provides advice and solutions until major issues are resolved and the path ahead is evident.

Mr. Smerchansky focuses significant leadership and oversight on correcting deficiencies with the Marine Corps information assurance (IA) certification and accreditation (C&A) process. Prior to his involvement, Marine Corps acquisition programs were averaging a full year-and-a-half to have their systems evaluated for IA security vulnerabilities and accredited to operate on Marine Corps/joint networks. Affecting changes within the Marine Corps infrastructure to better stabilize accreditation C&A to support the acquisition process, he assumed responsibilities as the Service Certification Authority and conducted an evaluation of the IA/security engineering designs in alignment with standard systems engineering processes. Following an evaluation and mitigation of all security vulnerabilities, he would then forward a certification determination identifying residual risk to the Service Designated Accrediting Authority for accreditation. This separation of the security engineering certification from the accreditation (acceptance of risk) ensures that the command’s engineering and information technology professional workforce maintains positive control on design and development of systems throughout the acquisition lifecycle.

In addition, Mr. Smerchansky provides guidance and direction for the development and deployment of an Integrated Master Schedule that enables management of documentation delivery and event date scheduling for the C&A process, thus reducing the engineer’s certification “touch time” by 45 percent − effectively streamlining the process. He has also accelerated development and deployment of the MARCORSYSCOM and Headquarters Marine Corps, Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration cooperatively-developed data repository for Marine Corps systems engineering and integrated architecture information. The launch of this environment, known as the “MAGTF Collaborative Architecture Environment” (MCAE), supports the first service-level standard framework methodology to generate reusable architecture/systems descriptive data object for support of Marine Corps-applicable joint capability areas, Joint Capability Interoperability Development System documentation, and Department of Defense Architecture Framework products. Initially, MCAE provides system architects a master catalog consisting of common data sets from which architects will build operational and system architecture products. As use of common data sets enables consistent representation across architecture development efforts and aids in the longer range objective of federating architecture efforts, these data sets comprise architectural authoritative data and are published within MCAE. His leadership in this domain enabled development of this government-off-the-shelf/commercial-off-the-shelf environment to place authoritative information developed by the Marine Corps under configuration control for reuse over time. This environment is expected to provide a 30 to 40 percent reduction in architectural development through data reuse, thus saving the Marine Corps countless dollars and labor hours.

Advocating for stronger modeling and simulation (M&S) in Marine Corps acquisition, Mr. Smerchansky initiated action to revitalize the M&S organization at MARCORSYSCOM through assignment of dedicated civilian and military personnel and by creating a command environment that facilitates communication between the command, other government activities, academia, and industry. His superior leadership resulted in establishment of critical foundational changes in the MARCORSYSCOM technical community that significantly improved the inter-relationship between the acquisition community and the M&S engineering community. He orchestrated development of the Framework for Assessing Cost and Technology (FACT) toolset in response to the acquisition community’s need for M&S risk-based decision tools. These decision tools effectively address analysis of alternatives for combat vehicle performance, reliability, and cost. As FACT is a cutting-edge M&S toolset that uses a “system of systems” approach to address analysis of alternatives for the amphibious combat vehicle, it is capable of assessing cost, schedule, and performance risk by employing processes that use algorithms and physics-based non-linear computational models, as well as cost-estimating models to support the acquisition life cycle of Marine Corps vehicles. Based on the application of meta-data and data format standardization, FACT is reusable and extensible to support analysis of other vehicle programs. This capability is also being coordinated to extract information from the MCAE authoritative data environment. As he saw the potential for FACT to be part of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) $400 million Advanced Vehicle Make (AVM) program, he subsequently and proactively initiated discussions between MARCORSYSCOM and DARPA to explore opportunities to collaborate and leverage FACT’s activities with the AVM program, furthering the benefit offered by this valuable tool.

In addition to his many accomplishments and contributions to the Marine Corps in technical arenas and within the engineering community, Mr. Smerchansky also serves as the MARCORSYSCOM goal champion to “Improve our processes and stakeholder relationships to enhance mission execution.” Fundamental to this goal is strengthening key internal acquisition and technical processes to gain efficiencies and encourage innovation. As he leads efforts to achieve Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) – Acquisition Level 3, other aspects of the goal include developing a corporate campaign plan to improve working relationships with key stakeholder organizations, supporting the Marine Corps implementation of total life cycle management, and fostering effective integration of acquisition with the combat development and planning, programming, budgeting, and execution system processes. Specific achievements include conducting a CMMI gap analysis to identify opportunities for improvement, developing a process improvement plan, establishing a command policy review board with representation from all acquisition competencies, and establishing guidelines and criteria for preparing and implementing key policies, as well as assessing the effectiveness of MARCORSYSCOM policies and work processes. As other achievements associated with this goal include identification of significant issues with the Information Technology Procurement Request Review-Approval System and a Lean Six Sigma event, his contributions resulted in MARCORSYSCOM having much greater involvement in the requirements development and transition process, which ultimately will generate more efficient processes and higher quality products.

In summary, Mr. Smerchansky ’s superior leadership, as evidenced above, directly contributed to MARCORSYSCOM’s mission to serve as the Commandant’s agent for acquisition and sustainment of systems and equipment used to accomplish the Marine Corps warfighting mission. His long career of loyal service dedicated to Department of Defense and Marine Corps acquisition technical endeavors, combined with the breadth of his knowledge and uncanny ability to focus in on root technical issues, characterize the impact of his executive leadership. His accomplishments make him worthy of this recognition.